

us can remember when America had hardly more than three or four fiction writers of repute, while half a dozen gentlemen only were writing the ballads and poems of the nation, and of the half-dozen, not more than four were distinctively American in their treatment of scenery and incident. Give Canada a chance. Give her time to have a large leisure class. Give to her literary men and women, the incentive and encouragement they need, and Canadian authorship will not lack in individuality and robustness. Much has been done in the way of education. Our wealthy men are endowing colleges, and founding scholarships in the universities. Our schools are practically free; in some of our provinces, they are entirely free. Perhaps, we are crowding too many men into the professions, but in time, even this error, if it be an error, will regulate itself. The country is beginning to pay attention to what men of culture and of thought have to say about the various problems of life and of human experience. Our lectures attract larger and more appreciative audiences. The people read more, and they are exercising greater discrimination in their reading than they ever did before, and, from all these signs, I feel that I am safe in predicting that the day of successful Canadian authorship is not far distant, and that we will yet have a literature of which we may feel reasonably proud, and that too, without changing our allegiance or altering our system of political and national life.

